

Case Study: 3000acres Facilitating Urban Agriculture in Melbourne, Australia

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Abstract : This paper presents a case study of 3000acres, a for-purpose organisation established in 2013 to improve the health of Melbournians by enabling them to grow more of their own food. Over the past four years, the organisation has encountered a number of barriers, both obvious and less obvious, which discourage communities from beginning their own food-growing projects. These include soil contamination, planning policies, public perception and access to land. 3000acres has been working to remove these barriers if possible, or otherwise to find ways around them. Strategies have included the use of removable planter boxes on temporarily vacant land, separating the site soil from above-ground garden beds, writing planning exemptions, developing relationships with land management authorities and recording both the quantitative and qualitative products of food gardens in Melbourne. While creating change in policy and legal requirements will be a gradual process, discernable progress has been made in the attitudes of land management authorities and the establishment of new food gardens is becoming easier. Over the past four years, 3000acres has supported the establishment of 14 food gardens in and around Melbourne, including public community gardens, fenced community gardens and urban farms supplying food to a food relief organisation.

Keywords : case study, community gardens, land access, land contamination, urban agriculture

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